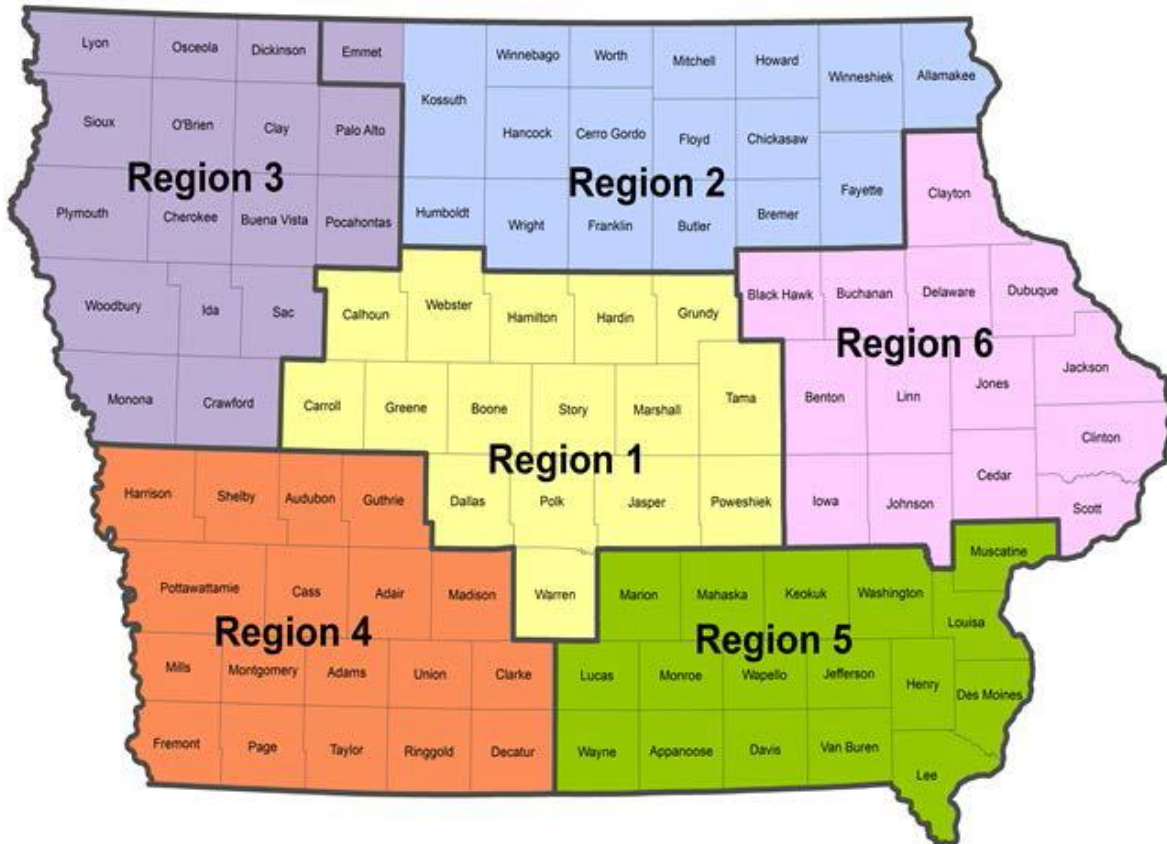


Strategies for Implementing Health Improvement Plans

Highlights from the CHNA & HIP 2014 Progress Reports



In 2014, local public health agencies submitted progress reports on their implementation efforts. Not only are the agencies continuing to use solid, evidence-based strategies to improve their community's health status, they also are trying out innovative approaches to address their priority needs. In general, these themes run through many of the reports:

- Wellness committees are actively designing projects to engage community members in becoming more physically active. The groups hold regular, monthly meetings.
- Partners involved in prevention and promotion are contributing staff and resources to projects that, otherwise, might not have been implemented.
- The Blue Zones have had a spillover effect on communities that did not receive Blue Zone designation; they continued to build on their plans.
- Agencies are beginning to see results of their goal-setting efforts that began in 2011-2012.

- Counties are finding ways of responding to mental health needs that include training of law enforcement personnel, information about scheduling telehealth appointments in one county, resource publications, and a 24-hour crisis line.
- Activities are evolving into policies related to nutrition, physical fitness, and tobacco for long-term impact.
- Counties are tackling the problem of transportation to health services through such efforts as volunteer drivers, taxicabs, and, in one county, operating a transportation service.

What follows is a selective list of **one initiative** from each county to engage the community in making it a place where health is a priority. Local public health agencies welcome inquiries about details of the initiative which is part of a more comprehensive effort to address the county's needs.

Adair	Iowa Unplugged , a two-day event, combined meditation, wine tasting, ballroom dancing, karaoke, and much more to relax, unwind, and have fun, an often forgotten aspect of staying healthy. Free shuttle service was provided by a Fun Party bus.
Adams	The county has reached its goal of increasing the number of mammograms. The Fight Like a Girl campaign with advertising increased awareness and funds to help with expenses for those diagnosed with breast cancer.
Allamakee	The number of school-age students receiving oral health care has increased because fourth year dental students and their instructor from the University of Iowa have been providing screenings, sealants, and fluoride varnish.
Audubon	Based on an independent survey of 11 th graders on how to reach this target group, a media campaign focused on social media to prevent binge drinking.
Benton	Following the social host ordinance passed by the Iowa Legislature, local ordinances in the county covered other illegal substances and increased the age restriction to 21 instead of the state-approved age of 18.
Black Hawk	Churches in low resource neighborhoods were enlisted to create wellness policies for nutrition, physical activity and accommodations for lactating mothers at all church-sponsored activities.
Boone	Managing Aggressive Behavior training is under way for emergency response personnel and other partners.
Bremer	The Visiting Nursing Association reached out to families attending the Family Fun Fair with a demonstration of the Period of Crying model.

Buchanan	Strong working relationships account for the four county newspapers giving health top billing; the newspapers published 195 articles, written by public health, the hospital, and the wellness center.
Buena Vista	Based on a needs assessment of young families the agency organized a community forum and formed a core group of concerned citizens to work on the issue.
Butler	To increase disaster preparedness, staff distributed preparedness bags and gave away solar/crank weather radios in drawing at the county fair.
Calhoun	Staff members are taking the Better Choices Better Health classes with staff from five other counties so that classes can be offered on a routine basis. Plans are to work with medical providers to encourage high-risk chronic disease patient referrals to the classes.
Cass	Walking paths have been designated for one, two, and three miles in the downtown area where people can easily walk with maps available at the courthouse chamber of commerce office, city hall, and businesses.
Cedar	There are 123 functional needs individuals on a special needs registry; the information will become part of an electronic health record system when it is implemented in the next fiscal year.
Cerro Gordo	Chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis testing is offered free of charge along with free medication for those who test positive.
Cherokee	A local grant-funded Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Drug Affected, Reality Works Infant Manikins have been an effective tool to reduce prenatal use of drugs and alcohol.
Chickasaw	Two school districts have built obesity programs into 2 nd , 5 th , and 8 th grades, and in high school.
Clarke	Family-friendly events include pool passes for low-income families and a weekly free swim night provided by a community donor.
Clay	For the first time, height and weight measurements were collected for all K-6 students in the county to establish a baseline to measure progress.
Clayton	Based on a parent survey, children in the Head Start program are more likely to choose or try health foods since participating in the Farm to Preschool program. Furthermore, the families have made healthier food or wellness choices since the children were enrolled in Head Start.
Clinton	Public health and Genesis VNA have started a Nurse Family Partner Program , an evidence-based program to help first-time, low-income moms.

Crawford	A literacy coalition has been established to deal not only with health literacy, but also with issues related to the county's diverse population needs.
Dallas	Complete Street policies to make communities more walkable were presented to the Dallas Center mayor and city council, the Van Meter mayor and city administration, and the Adel city council.
Davis	A community garden supplies produce to the local senior center; the school has obtained a grant to provide meals and produce from a school garden at school for students throughout the summer.
Decatur	A trolley operates in Leon with rides each month to Osceola and Des Moines; a taxi system is available to the hospital on a case-by-case basis for members of Medicaid.
Delaware	The percentage of newborn, breastfed babies delivered at the Regional Medical Center increased from 70% to 76.6%. Follow-up breastfeeding education continued through phone calls and check-ups.
Des Moines	To reduce the greater than expected foodborne illness rates, the health care coalition purchased a medical dispatch program to perform syndromic surveillance for alerting health care providers to potential foodborne illness.
Dickinson	Day-long babysitting classes prepare area youth to provide safe, nurturing care where youth learn about appropriate toys, easy cooking ideas, CPR, and how to handle choking.
Dubuque	The executive director of the Dubuque County Health Department is now a member of the Dubuque County Smart Planning Consortium; the consortium is developing a regional sustainability plan to guide land use development in the region.
Emmet	An Energizer after-school program meets at the regional wellness center for exercise along with learning opportunities; the Estherville Public Library partners with the wellness center.
Fayette	The public health agency has a separate link on the Palmer Lutheran Hospital website for health alerts which were used in 2014 when the phone lines were down to communicate with the public.
Floyd	A hospital dietitian makes home visits; the program is promoted through ISU Extension and public health.
Franklin	The community is making full use of the Rolling Prairie trail; the conservation agency provides senior rides for non-ambulatory residents.
Fremont	With information on the underlying issues teens are facing, a county-wide teen summit is being planned.

Grundy	Funding under the Community Transformation Grants may have ended, but public health is using the food system assessment to implement plans that increase local food production.
Guthrie	Girl Talk , meetings on sexually transmitted diseases with mothers and daughters in the fifth and sixth grade, are coordinated with ISU Extension.
Hamilton	Trained staff follows up children with high lead levels and provides lead-related information at monthly WIC clinics and preschool parent education nights.
Hancock	High school students who have received nutrition training make presentations to all third graders, offer different fruits and vegetables to them, and combine the education with physical activity. The grocer providing the food puts it on sale for that week/month.
Harrison	A major effort to reduce child abuse and neglect is under way that includes a Learning for Life program for families, a diaper bank, a community response team, and a clothesline hung with victims' stories of domestic abuse placed on the law enforcement building's lawn.
Humboldt	Lack of dental providers for Title 19 patients was addressed by working with dentists in outlying counties and finding partners to provide transportation.
Ida	The goal of increasing emergency preparedness volunteers is complete with the recruitment of 35 Medical Reserve Corps volunteers.
Iowa	A comprehensive stroke prevention program includes monthly clinics at senior dining sites, collaboration with weight watchers, exercise groups, and community centers, and wellness screenings.
Jackson	To increase awareness of suicide prevention strategies, the Maquoketa High School Club, Hope, organized a 5K walk/run. A Facebook link was created for youarenotalone .
Jasper	A solid referral system for substance abuse and mental health services was created and updated within United Way's 211.org website.
Jefferson	Funding is being solicited to purchase a generator for the emergency shelter, a step in ensuring that the shelter is maintained.
Johnson	Several agencies from the Johnson County Healthcare Outreach Group provided assistance counseling to enroll 3,176 people in the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan.
Jones	Two family planning clinics have been established; working with IDPH, plans are under way to distribute 2,000 condoms at such events as county fairs.

Keokuk	Keokuk County Public Health continues to be a Medicare-Certified Home Care Agency and has been successful in obtaining additional funding through Milestones and in using local tax dollars for home care services.
Kossuth	Two events to promote healthy activity included a Bike to Church weekend and a Glow Run with 800 participants who raised \$30,000 for a Bike/Walk trail.
Lee	A Give Kids a Smile Day program is sponsored each year in the community with dentists volunteering their services for exams, fluoride varnish, and some treatment work with an I-Smile coordinator available to link families and children to local dental services for follow-up and establishing a dental home.
Linn	Linn County Public Health and the Sexual Health Alliance have worked to put up condom dispenser throughout the county and increased marketing of free or reduced STD testing services.
Louisa	In an effort to establish improved access to communication and education services for all non-English speaking residents, a community development group translates printed materials into Burmese and Spanish.
Lucas	A broad-based coalition has decided to identify one site for accessing information on wellness activities and a marketing campaign to accompany the strategy.
Lyon	To increase immunization of adolescents, letters to parents identify what immunizations are needed for full immunization along with where this service is provided. Menactra and Tdap clinics are held in the schools with flu clinics planned for fall 2014.
Mahaska	Mahaska Safe Kids sponsored Stewards of Children/Darkness 2 Light Training for adults working with children to decrease the risk of child molestation.
Marshall	The community YMCA is engaged in diabetes prevention with a trained lifestyle coach to help individuals change lifestyle patterns.
Mills	A blood pressure program, introduced into two area dental clinics, includes education as well as handout materials, blood pressure cuffs, and support to implement the screening for each patient.
Mitchell	County employees are engaged in healthy lifestyle activities that help them save a small amount on their health insurance premiums. Activities include a preventive exam, completion of an online assessment on wellness, and participation in up to four healthy lifestyle programs.
Monroe	Open gym time is available at the high school along with an open weight room when a monitor is present.

Montgomery	A Latino Center translates materials into Spanish and public health hires an interpreter to meet the needs of the Latino population.
Muscatine	The May through October farmer's markets have organized entertainment and demonstrations such as cooking, food preparation, and food storage.
O'Brien	Efforts to support emergency medical services included free seasonal vaccines for volunteer ambulance teams and assistance with yearly TB testing requirements for the teams. One team held a "Ride along" night for potential ambulance team members, also supported by public health.
Osceola	Community volunteers completed the GPS community mapping which is being used to increase the number of children walking and biking safely to school.
Page	The Montgomery County Endowment Fund, Hy-Vee, and the National Methodist Churches were sources of funding for obesity/overweight prevention activities.
Palo Alto	The Immunization rate for children younger than 24 months increased from 80% to 86% by changing the process of recalls. Phone calls made it possible to schedule children's appointments while the parents were still on the phone.
Plymouth	Nursing interns developed healthy eating, beverages, and fast food materials that were given to parents bringing their children for well-child exams.
Pocahontas	Efforts to raise awareness of mental health services include a hotline number, wide distribution of brochures, the local health agency website, and information about the hospital scheduling telehealth appointments.
Polk	Under the leadership of the Polk County Housing Trust Fund, a Continuum of Care Board is being organized to craft a plan to end homelessness; the first part of a comprehensive inventory has been completed.
Poweshiek	After-hours assistance for mental health needs is now available through a 24-hour crisis line and ER.
Ringgold	Tobacco policy changes include tobacco-free park policies, banning advertising sponsorships and giveaways, and tobacco-use questions added to the WIC Clinic intake form, hospital discharge form, and Family Resource Center enrollment form.
Sac	Members of the county youth council met with the county fair board to discuss a smoke-free fairground policy patterned after Ringgold County's policy. The council succeeded as a first step in posting more no smoking signs on the fairgrounds with continuing to make a difference in fair policies.

Scott	Mental health first aid training was provided to public safety professionals including the sheriff's department, the Bettendorf's Police Department, and the Davenport Police Department.
Shelby	A comprehensive effort is under way to increase and coordinate mental health services in the schools and worksites.
Sioux	Steps taken to provide culturally-appropriate services include local agency bilingual staff, signage at the new Sioux Center Hospital in Spanish and in Braille, and sexual health information through the Latina Health Coalition.
Story	The goal of increasing access to behavioral health, oral health care, and prenatal services to low-income residents has been achieved with the opening of a Primary Health Care Clinic.
Taylor	A full-time 1 st Five Healthy Mental Development Coordinator has visited all medical clinics to secure letters of commitment for referrals.
Union	Lead poisoning prevention information is being disseminated through social media (Facebook).
Van Buren	During check-ups, clients needing preventive care can make same-day appointments; their records are flagged as a reminder to the providers.
Warren	A Key Card Program focuses on opening doors of recreational events to those who could not otherwise afford them. By using the key card, the holder is eligible to receive reduced cost (generally 50% off) or free admission to certain recreation facilities, programs, classes, and events.
Washington	The school district has identified youth to participate in the SAFE Coalition, the entity that brings stakeholders together on a monthly basis to discuss, strategize, and implement programs addressing adolescent health issues.
Wayne	A comprehensive lead-poisoning prevention and treatment program has resulted in some dramatic improvements for children.
Webster	Working with the community college, the health department has developed a comprehensive program to reduce high-risk behaviors among the students. Family planning, STD, HIV, and HepC services will be offered to students in the fall.
Winnebago	As part of a coalition holding monthly meetings to coordinate a variety of prevention and promotion projects, the pharmacists are distributing information about disposing of unused prescription medications.

Winneshiek	A county plan for disposing of hazardous waste was implemented and included a county-wide cleanup day with a mile-long waiting line of people dropping off hazardous and two successful days for appliance drop-offs.
Woodbury	A committee representing local business and non-profit groups have been meeting to investigate a year-long (indoor/outdoor) location for a farmer's market. A second farmer's market opened in a lower socio-economic income area.
Worth	Worth County Public Health operates the transit system in the county, making it possible to schedule rides for medical appointments and other related health activities.
Wright	Maps with ½ mile to 1 mile routes are posted on the website and available at the libraries or public buildings. A Community Health Walk on Wednesdays is a routinely-offered 15-minute walk with a group leader.